GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2180
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2000
MEASURES TO STOP CHEAP IMPORTS
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to take a series of measures to stop cheap imports from neighbouring countries and to take strict action against the importers to protect the domestic industries:

(b) if so, the details of action plan prepared in this regard;

(c) whether W.T.O. rules would permit quantitative restrictions on imports;

(d) if so, the time by which the Government would start actions to control such cheap imports; and

(e) the reasons for not taking any action in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

(a) to (e) As per Article XI of GATT, maintenance of Quantitative Restrictions on imports is not permitted.However, to provide protection to the domestic producers the Government can, if the situation so warrants, utilize the mechanism of raising the applied tariffs within the bound rates, if such a gap exists and take measures such as Anti-Dumping Action, imposition of Counter-vailing duties and Safeguard actions which are permissible under the WTO Agreements.

The imports are being closely monitored and the Government are determined to ensure through the appropriate use of the above mechanisms that imports do not cause any serious injury to the domestic producers. Some of the recent measures towards that end are as follows:-

(i) Import duties on a number of items have been increased, for example, the duty on arecanut has been raised from 35% to 100%, on poultry products from 35% to 100%, on wheat from 0% to 50%, on skimmed milk powder from 0% to 60%, on apple from 35% to 50%, and on rice from 0% to 80%.

(ii) Suo-moto anti-dumping investigations have been initiated in respect of import of battery cells, battery operated toys and sports shoes from China.

(iii) Import of all packaged commodities have been made subject to compliance of all the conditions of the Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodity) Order, 1977, as applicable on domestic producers.

(iv) Import of 131 products has been made subject to compliance of the mandatory Indian quality standards as applicable to domestic goods. For compliance of this requirement all manufacturers/ exporters of these products to India shall be required to register themselves with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).The list of 131 products includes various food preservatives and additives, milk powder, infant milk food, certain kinds of cement, household and similar electrical appliances, gas cylinders and multipurpose dry batteries.